

Message Text

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TO USLO PEKING IMMEDIATE

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NODIS

CHEROKEE, FOR AMBASSADOR GATES FROM THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PFOR, CH, US

SUBJECT: CHANG CHUN-CHIAO'S MEETING WITH SENATOR SCOTT

REF: PEKING 1283, PEKING 1288, PEKING 1293

1. I APPRECIATED YOUR RAPID AND FULL REPORTING ON SENATOR SCOTT'S MEETING WITH VICE PREMIER CHANG CHUN-CHIAO JULY 13 AND YOUR PROMPT ANALYSIS. I WANT YOU TO HAVE OUR OWN INITIAL REACTION TO THIS DEVELOPMENT.

2. IN TERMS OF BASIC PRINCIPLES, CHANG NEITHER CHANGED NOR ADDED TO THE CHINESE POSITION ON TAIWAN AND US-PRC RELATIONS. HE EXPLICITLY STATED THAT BOTH SIDES SHOULD CONTINUE TO ACT IN ACCORD WITH THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE AND AFFIRMED CHINESE WILLINGNESS TO DO SO. CHANG'S REFERENCE TO THE THREE POINTS IN THE SO-CALLED JAPAN

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FORMULA WAS SIMPLY THE REITERATION OF A POSITION THAT THE

CHINESE HAVE PRESENTED TO US ON A VARIETY OF OCCASIONS GOING BACK TO MY VISIT TO PEKING IN NOVEMBER 1974. ON THE CRUCIAL QUESTION OF A "PEACEFUL SOLUTION" TO THE TAIWAN QUESTION, NOT ONLY DO THE US AND CHINESE POSITIONS DIFFER IN THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE, BUT NONE OF THE TOP CHINESE LEADERS, INCLUDING CHOU, MAO, AND TENG, HAS EVER LIFTED THE THREAT THAT THE TAIWAN PROBLEM WOULD ULTIMATELY HAVE TO

BE RESOLVED BY MILITARY MEANS. WHILE THEIR FORMULATIONS VARY, ON MORE THAN ON OCCASION, INCLUDING STATEMENTS AT THE MOST AUTHORITATIVE LEVEL, THEY HAVE REFERRED TO THE MILITARY LIBERATION OF TAIWAN AS PROBABLY INEVITABLE. THEY HAVE NEVER, HOWEVER, ADVANCED ANY PRECISE TIME FRAME IN WHICH THIS WOULD TAKE PLACE, AND WE NOTE THAT CHANG TOO DID NOT IMPLY THAT THERE WAS ANY DEADLINE FOR SETTLEMENT OF THE TAIWAN ISSUE. HE ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT THE CHINESE POSITION ON TAIWAN REMAINS UNCHANGED. MOREOVER, FOR ALL HIS DISDAIN ABOUT THE US--E.G. ON ANGOLA--CHANG REMINDED SCOTT THAT IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA WE HAVE MANY POINTS IN COMMON.

3. ON BALANCE, WHILE WE DO NOT EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY THAT CHANG'S OUTBURST REPRESENTS A HARDENING OF PRC ATTITUDES, BOTH CHANG AND CH'IAO WOULD NOT HAVE GONE AS FAR AS THEY DID IF SCOTT HAD NOT CONFRONTED THEM SO DIRECTLY ON TAIWAN AND PERSISTED IN ARGUING SO STUBBORNLY. (I PERSONALLY ADVISED SCOTT THAT HE SHOULD NOT PRESS THE CHINESE ON THIS SENSITIVE ISSUE.) PARTICULARLY AFTER READING THE FULL TRANSCRIPT OF SCOTT'S MEETING WITH CH'IAO THE DAY BEFORE, WE ARE STRUCK BY THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE CHINESE MAY HAVE FELT THEY WERE BEING PRESSED ON THE "PEACEFUL LIBERATION" ISSUE. SCOTT'S OWN EFFORTS BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FOR PEKING TO PLAY UP THE IMPORTANCE OF HIS MISSION AND TO CREATE THE IMPRESSION THAT HE WAS A PRESIDENTIAL EMISSARY MAY WELL HAVE REINFORCED THESE CONSIDERATIONS IN CHINESE MINDS. IT WAS A PARTICULARLY TOUGH WEEK FOR THE CHINESE ON THE TAIWAN ISSUE IN VIEW OF THE OLYMPICS IMBROGLIO AND MIYAZAWA'S STATEMENTS ON US-PRC RELATIONS. MOREOVER, CHANG'S REACTION TO SCOTT MUST BE SEEN AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S

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EXPLICIT STATEMENTS THAT NORMALIZATION WILL NOT BE COMPLETED THIS YEAR AS WELL AS AN INCREASE IN PUBLIC COMMENTARY IN THE US REGARDING THE IMPORTANCE OF ENSURING TAIWAN'S SECURITY.

4. CHANG HAS LONG HAD THE REPUTATION OF BEING CLOSE TO THE IDEOLOGICAL LEFT, BUT THE PICTURE OF HIM THAT EMERGES IN THE FLESH IS EVEN MORE ABRASIVE, MILITANT, AND

POLEMICAL THAN WE HAD IMAGINED. (WE FOUND YOUR OBSERVATIONS ON HIS Demeanor VERY PERCEPTIVE.) EVEN THOUGH WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT DOMESTIC ISSUES AND POWER RIVALRIES LIE AT THE ROOT OF THE DIVISIONS WITHIN PEKING'S CURRENT LEADERSHIP, CHANG'S PERFORMANCE GIVES US INSIGHT INTO THE POSSIBLE EFFECTS THAT A GREATER LEFTIST ROLE IN THE LEADERSHIP COULD HAVE ON CHINA'S FOREIGN POLICY. IF CHANG'S STAR IS IN FACT RISING, WE MAY FIND OURSELVES DEALING INCREASINGLY WITH A MAN WHOSE STYLE

AND MANNERISMS DO NOT SIT WELL WITH AMERICANS AND WHO SEEMS REMARKABLY UNCONCERNED ABOUT ESTABLISHING PERSONAL RAPPORT WITH HIS GUESTS, AS YOU SO ACCURATELY POINTED OUT.

5. IF CHANG CONTINUES TO BE THE RANKING PRC LEADER WHO MEETS WITH US DELEGATIONS, OR IF OTHER CHINESE DEALING WITH AMERICANS BEGIN TO ECHO HIS REMARKS ON THIS OCCASION, WE CAN ANTICIPATE THAT THIS WILL HAVE A CUMULATIVELY NEGATIVE IMPACT ON CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES REGARDING FURTHER NORMALIZATION. ROBINSON

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